

1,472 Combat-Injured South Carolina Veterans Lose \$1.77 Million Monthly as Senate Action Stalls Major Star Act

Advocates urge Sens. Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott to support S.Amdt. 4056 to restore earned retirement pay

THE **WOUNDED** VETERAN **TAX**: BLEEDING SOUTH CAROLINA VETERANS DRY

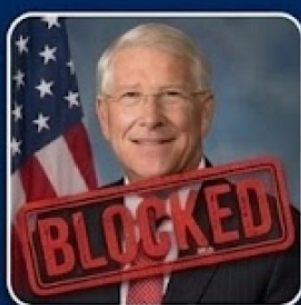
\$21,196,800 YEARLY LOSS



\$1,766,400 MONTHLY LOSS



1,472 SOUTH CAROLINA VETS AFFECTED



**Senator Roger Wicker blocked the
Major Richard Star Act on Oct 8, 2025.**

**This “Wounded Warrior Tax”
siphons millions from our state
economy.**

SOUTH CAROLINA VETERANS DESERVE THEIR FULL RETIREMENT PAY.

**DEMAND ACTION. SIGN THE PETITION:
change.org/54KVeterans**

Columbia, South Carolina Jan 1, 2026 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Combat-injured, medically retired veterans in South Carolina are losing an estimated **\$1.77 million every month** due to a federal retirement offset that remains unresolved in the United States Senate, according to data released by veteran advocates. The loss affects **1,472 South Carolina veterans** whose military careers were cut short by combat-related injuries.

Under current law, many veterans medically retired under Chapter 61 must waive their Department of Defense retired pay dollar-for-dollar in order to receive VA disability compensation. For these veterans, disability compensation replaces—rather than supplements—the retirement pay they earned through service.

At an average loss of approximately **\$1,200 per month per veteran**, the offset removes nearly **\$21.3 million annually** from South Carolina households and local economies.

“This is not theoretical,” said **Senior Chief Shane Junkert, USN (Ret.)**, founder of 54KVeterans.org. “For 1,472 South Carolina families, this is real money every month that was earned through service and sacrifice, but never paid.”

Legislative Background

The **Major Richard Star Act** is named for an Army combat engineer who served in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait and later died from lung cancer linked to burn pit exposure. The legislation applies narrowly to combat-injured veterans who were medically retired before reaching 20 years of service.

The bill would end the retirement offset for this specific group, allowing eligible veterans to receive both their earned military retirement pay and VA disability compensation. It does not create a new benefit, expand eligibility, or change VA disability ratings. Veterans who complete 20 years of service already receive both benefits under existing law.

In **2021**, Senator Roger Wicker of Mississippi cosponsored earlier versions of the legislation and described the proposal as a commonsense fix to an unfair retirement offset. On **October 8, 2025**, however, Senator Wicker objected to advancing the bill by unanimous consent, preventing a recorded vote in the Senate.

“Publicly supporting a bill and later stopping it are two very different actions,” Junkert said. “The record shows the bill had broad bipartisan backing, yet a single objection halted progress for tens of thousands of combat-injured retirees.”

A recent Mississippi television news report examined the objection and highlighted a billboard campaign funded by veterans to draw attention to the stalled legislation.

<https://youtu.be/zMYuPw4ELTA?si=Fy2EsseWt1ChaRX4>

A New Path Forward: S.Amdt. 4056

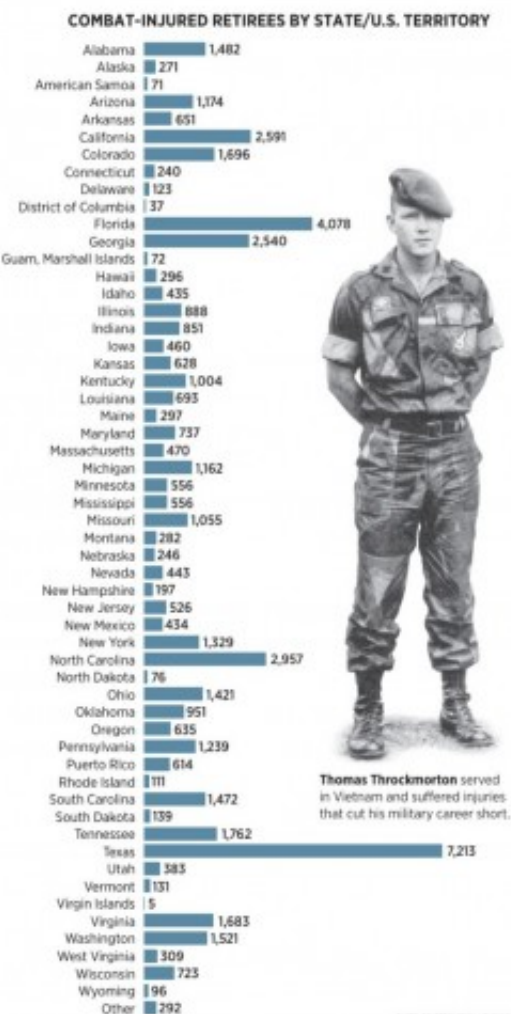
On **December 16, 2025**, Senator Richard Blumenthal filed **S.Amdt. 4056**, which would attach the Major Richard Star Act to must-pass defense funding legislation. Supporters say the amendment creates an opportunity for an on-the-record Senate decision.

Advocates are urging **South Carolina Senators Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott** to publicly support S.Amdt. 4056 as a mechanism to resolve the issue.

"This amendment turns a quiet procedural block into a transparent decision," Junkert said. "It gives every senator the chance to stand either with combat-injured retirees or with a process that has delayed relief for years."

About 54KVeterans.org

54KVeterans.org is a grassroots coalition of combat-injured veterans advocating for passage of the Major Richard Star Act. The organization is led by Senior Chief Shane Junkert, USN (Ret.), a decorated combat veteran who completed six combat deployments during 18.5 years of service before being medically retired due to combat-related injuries. The coalition represents approximately **54,000 veterans nationwide** affected by the Chapter 61 retirement offset.



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Thomas Throckmorton served in Vietnam and suffered injuries that cut his military career short.

He healed again to help m people to While Cor for comba special oc come clot ton stress "The thing is why, if I compens ceipt ... W



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